

Halo: SPARTAN III: Delta Company

by Reanimation-06

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Summary: The SPARTAN III Delta Company is created out of mankind's despair to save themselves and their planet. Within it, 3 Spartans must desperately attempt to survive and resist the inexorable Covenant onslaught to win the war for the sake of us all...

Halo: SPARTAN III: Delta Company

My first Halo Fanfic... so please Read and Review... I would appreciate detailed and helpful comments, even if they consist of criticism.

I have realized the ninjas and spartans from Bungie and "others" are stalking and watching... so a worthwhile disclaimer:

Disclaimer: I do not own any characters, logos, weapons, armor, or any other Halo related (registered) concept that I have used in this story. They strictly belong to Bungie, the talented author, Eric and the other numerous people who have made the Halo universe a worthwhile experience. All the quotes at the beginning of each chapter are also copyright by various organizations, bands, artists, companies, etc. I respect their author(s), and use them because they have caught my attention in describing occurrences in vivid detail and because of their deep philosophical nature...

So now... Lets
Begin!

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HALO : SPARTAN-III Delta
Company

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_...I have walked among men and angels for thousands of
yearsâ€|_

â€|_Time has no end... no beginning... no purposeâ€| _

_â€|I wander the earth, seeking forgiveness for my horrible crimes
against god and manâ€|_

_â€|I live to see death, destruction, over the light, but the light
cannot be extinguishedâ€|_

â€|I live in a prison of my own demiseâ€|

_â€|I am lost in
time..._

â€|_(repeats)â€|_

* * *

>(Sol System, Earth, Australia, Sidney, ONI Command Center,
Conference Room)
 ****(1800 Hours, November 1, 2552 Military Time
Calendar)**

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<p>// FILE ACCESS GRANTED /// Worm-Protocol Firewall Diffusion
Enabled ///

NLC Transmission: IXX-AI-124

Encryption Code: Epsilon

Public Key: N/A

Encryption Code: Medusa

From: Codename Myth

To: Codename Defer

Subject: SPARTAN-III Delta Company

Classification: Private Eyes Only/ Top Secret (ONI Section Three Deduction)

// File Self-Extraction Reconstruction Sequence Complete // Start File //

Please assess the following studies on the most promising candidates for the SPARTAN-III Delta Company. They will be recruited into a solitary unit, if they prove themselves that they can surpass our standards, though there is little doubt for that. However, due to Section 7-IV, Part 3.12 of ONI regulations, their entire existence will be kept top secret, from other members of ONI and UNSC without proper clearance. When required, Spartan-117 will know of their existence, and work with them in battle circumstances. They will work in a 3-person squad labeled Team 105, on lone missions and will not work with any other members of UNSC, and/or ONI (excluding Spartan-117), as long as all 3 members of Team 105 remain able-bodied, for combat.

The recruits consist of SPARTAN-D092, SPARTAN-D023, and SPARTAN-D115. Their abilities far surpass any other candidates for SPARTAN-III program. If chosen, they will be trained for five additional years in actual combat, in which they will experience the same routine as the SPARTAN-II recruits. They have undergone the same augmentation process as the SPARTAN-IIs, and the SPARTAN-IIIs but their abilities are further enhanced by neuropeptides. They will be deemed worthy of the highest honor, because of their bravery and skill, if all goes as planned. However, due to the looming threat of the covenant, they will be trained vigorously even for a SPARTAN-III recruit. It is presumed by comparison, that Team 105 recruiting training will be 285 percent of the standard at which SPARTAN-IIs trained, and 250 percent of the standard at which SPARTAN-IIIs will be trained. This is all in hope, that they will be ready to battle the covenant, should they ever reach Earth.

We tested the recruits in a simulation, with force feedback, against a Level 9 AI Covenant fleet. This AI fleet is named AI Final Scenario, and it consists of a scenario AI, which illustrates an entire fleet invading Earth. The AI Final Scenario consists of: 70 Elites, 30 pair of Hunters, 300 jackals of various sorts, and 1000 grunts, and ground vehicles suitable of their needs. According to ONI programming regulations division, 1 Level 9 AI elite is equivalent of: 5 Elites, 3 Pairs of Hunters, and 10 Blue-shielded Jackals platoon, with a 95 percent hit rate skill, with any suitable weapon. This particular AI unit, consisting of a whole covenant fleet to stimulate a full-scale invasion on Earth, was tested in another simulation, and the results were overwhelming. They defeated: 400 Elites, 75 Pairs of Hunters, 1500 Jackals, and an unknown number of grunts, though it is estimated at 5000, with only 7 mortal elite/hunter casualties. This may seem unrealistic, but the simulation video can be viewed anytime from ONI headquarters, Terminal 30-35, by searching: AI-Construct-IXX-AI-124. Currently this is being analyzed as it opens up many possibilities with AI assistance in actual battle against the Covenant, and to a lesser extent, to enhance our slip space drives. (To check the latest results, search for file: Tech.AI.147.VI.exe)

We also raised the force feedback to 350 percent, so that the recruits will feel the pain as it is real, if they get hurt for any

reason, though unknown to them, it will be exaggerated to prepare and test them. This is another way of ensuring that they will surpass the skills needed to stop the relentless Covenant onslaught. This also ensures, that all their actions are as realistic as possible, and that they have no advantage over the simulation AI.

Below is the attached video link for the simulation:

<http://unsc.simulations.oni/SPARTAN-III/Delta/Sim/Team105/AI-FinalScenario>

Due to the clearance level required, and to keep Team 105 separate and undisclosed, the video is documented in text-only format. This is to achieve the effect that no one will have seen Team 105 in flesh, and that personal connections will not grow towards any spartan.

/ End File/ Preset-Eradication Sequence Commence /

(Press any key to
continueâ€¦|)

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>(Epsilon Eridani Star System, Eridanus 2, SPARTAN-III
Training Camp & ONI Research Base)
 ****(1500 Hours, October
27, 2552 Military Time Calendar)**

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<p>SPARTAN-D092 glanced at the floor again, thinking about his situation.<p>

For years, Dream had trained like a spartan, and now they were testing him again to see if he was worth being the candidate for the SPARTAN-III Delta Company. All the challenges he had overcome, all the obstacles he had removed from his life, all the people he had stepped on, just to show that he is be the best, and now they were testing him again. He hated the world like never before. Now, he realized that his hate was his strengthâ€¦| and his ultimate weakness. Moreover, this test was like no otherâ€¦| The ODSTs had told him that it would be a regular simulation to see his improvements over the year, but he knew better. They had underestimated him once again, though this rarely surprised him anymore. If it was a regular test, he would have been facing or teamed with his numerous incompetent fellow candidates. He was infuriated by them. According to the statistics provided by the UNSC and ONI, the average IQ of a SPARTAN-III recruit was 148, at the age of 14. Nevertheless, all of them were senseless and unintelligent when facing enemies in a combat situation if compared to him, except 2 fellow spartans.

He knew that they, and the SPARTAN-IIIs, were humanity's last hope against the covenant juggernauts. They had come out of nowhere, annihilating all human colonies they had faced. They had even

obliterated the colony of Reach, in the Epsilon Eridani star system, which seemed like humanity's strongest fort, other than home base, Earth. He had heard that almost all of the SPARTAN-II recruits had been deployed to defend Reach's Super M.A.C. Unfortunately, the covenant had won by dominated the space battle, and there had been no hope for colony. The covenant had scorched away Reach, stripping it of all life, but the spartans had merely been marked MIA. He knew this was done to maintain the spartan's god-like image, and increase morale.

The spartans had failed, failed miserably, and he knew it. He suspected that only 3 or 4 SPARTAN-IIs remained, if any were alive and able-bodied in combat at all. That was why there were recruiting candidates for the SPARTAN-III program. He had heard about the first two waves of SPARTAN-IIIs. The Alpha and the Beta company of SPARTAN-IIIs. As the legends and rumors grew he realized that SPARTAN-III Alpha and Beta companies had cost the Covenant very dearly. They had destroyed the Covenant's biggest shipyard and refineries, where they had manufactured their fearful aerial and ground assault vehicles and ships.

> He acknowledged the greater range of Covenant technology, and appreciated it for all the variety it offered for ground invasion fleet: Ghosts, as light reconnaissance scout vehicles, Banshees, as airborne ground-attack vehicles, and Wraiths, as the main battle tanks for indirect heavy damage. To face them in ground combat, humans only had Scorpion tanks, which were too bulky for operation, and Warthogs, which were useless, if it had less than two occupants. The covenant were able to operate all their ground vehicles with one person, while Warthogs required two. That was the main disadvantage, for the marines in ground combat when using vehicles. To level that disadvantage, Spartans were there; the equivalent of hundreds of marines, their god-like wrath was unfettered and raw against the covenant. However, the covenant had outbalanced that too. They just scorched away at planets, as soon as the controlled the space around it. The UNSC fleet was just too small and technologically inferior to make any difference to Covenant, with their numerous war cruisers in space in extended warfare.
 He knew, that the only hope of destroying the Covenant was to infect them from the inside, and rip them apart, from thereon in, like a virus; and that is what spartans were for |

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>SPARTAN-D023 sat at his bunk, at the SPARTAN-III training camp. He recognized that UNSC was finally testing them for the final hurdle. He did care about it, but thinking about the future was not his way, unless it was required by necessity in a battle circumstance. <p>Lone turned around, looked at his fellow spartans, training outside the camp. All of them were practicing close range combat. They moved so fluidly, like liquid metal, striking like spirits, at each other, in mock combat. Each one of them was a fully capable proof of what humans could do against threats. He wanted to join them, but he had to practice his sniping skills. He turned his back on his teammates, and went back to upgrading his S2-AM Sniper Rifle's scope, with the new equipment he had received.<p>

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>SPARTAN-D115 tried to duck under the series of fierce jabs that came at his unprotected temple. One of the jabs hit him on the temple, and

he reeled from the blow. It would have killed an ordinary person, but Chaos was a spartan. It merely served as a painful reminder of the reality. He faked an uppercut, and at the last moment, he struck at his attacker's sturdy legs. The attacker attempted to jump over Chaos's kick, but he was too late. The attacker was off balance for a moment, and that was when Chaos chose to strike. He lashed out with the heel of his palm, and squarely hit attacker in his lungs. His attacker kneeled over, and spurted blood from his mouth. Chaos took the initiative to finish the fight, and pushed the assailant into the ground. <p>His attacker turned over, and coughed expressively with a bloody mouth, and probably a few broken ribs.<p>

"Ahhh! Didn't hurt you too bad, did I?" asked Chaos, to his fellow spartan, Jack.

Jack's reply was to twist over, impossibly fast, faster than a viper when it strikes, and in a millisecond, their positions had reversed.

Chaos realized what had happened. Jack had fooled him into letting down his guard, and he had twisted Chaos's arm, using his light weight to his advantage, he had flipped Chaos with his own momentum and smashed him face first in the ground. He realized that he would have died, if this were real combat.

Jack stood up, dusted himself off, and helped his friend to his feet.

"Never hesitate to finish the enemy offâ€¦ remember its either him or youâ€¦" advised Jack.

"You are getting better and better everyday, Jack. I'm now afraid to underestimate you anymore..." replied Chaos.

"Thanksâ€¦ I trained with the best of--"

He was cut off when an Orbital Drop Shock Trooper blew three short blasts of his piercingly shrill whistle, and every spartan stopped their combat training to stand at attention.

"SIR! YES SIR!" bellowed all the spartans, while standing as still as statues.

"Resume all except SPARTAN-D115!" commanded the ODS, followed by "SPARTAN-D115, front and center!"

> Chaos obeyed and found that the ODS had a message for him. He learned that he was being tested again, in a simulation. For the test, he was called to the military base's command center. He obeyed the orders, and when he reached the military base's command center, he was sent to the simulations training room, housed three virtual reality simulators, complete with a downgraded version of MARK VI MJOLNIR armor, which SPARTAN-IIs wore in real combat. There, he was told to wait for two of his fellow teammates.<p>

Chaos sat down in a chair, and started meditating

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>An ODS informed both Dream and Lone that they were required in the command center's simulation training room, and they made their way to

the location. <p>The door opened and two spartans entered, with 5 technicians and Colonel James Ackerson. They briefly glanced at the spartan meditating inside, who rose and saluted them in the blink of an eye.<p>

"At ease, spartan!" answered the colonel.

"Now you 3 spartans will be tested in a simulation. We are no longer allowed to inform you of the simulation rules, and standards, but remember thisâ€¦ If you fail, I do not think you will remain human enough to become spartans anymoreâ€¦ Oh, yes! In this simulation, you will don the MJOLNIR armor, and use it to your advantage. I am sure you are familiar with these circumstances, due to your previous training with the simulations. The pain you feel now will be very realâ€¦ even more real than reality. Everything else is classical informationâ€¦!" informed the colonel.

"Commenceâ€¦!" he commanded the technicians.

The spartans realized that this was serious, because the colonel was too sentimental, and they realized that this simulation would be as dangerous as a real mission, of the same caliber would.

The technicians strapped them into the simulators, and helped them don the MJOLNIR armor, which contained the body interface in the simulation.

Before the simulations started, the technicians were forced to intertwine the spartans' minds with the simulator, so that the only way for them to escape was to accomplish the objective, or die. It also ensured that each one of them would forget that they were in a simulation. They would just remember that they were on a mission to complete, and not know that it wasn't real, that it was just a test.

Colonel Ackerson stayed behind as all of them left. Before the simulation started, he entered his own program code, into the virtual drive. He installed an AI, Seeker, in the interface of Dream's armor. The AI would help Dream, and enhance his skills, endurance, and neural response time. He knew that Dream, and his teammates would need every advantage they could get to beat this inhumanely cruel simulation. When he was finished, he turned around, found a chair, and sat down. He stared at the wall for 2 hours, his head full of whirling thoughts, and then left. Upon leaving, he ensured that at least one technician was to be in the simulation room at all times, so he would realize when the spartans had returned from the human made hell to which they had departed.

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r>Simulation Class: Multiplayer against AI Fleet

Simulation Type: CTF (Capture the Flag) Variation

Simulation Type Variation: Detonate Havoc Nuke Located At Flag Point

Simulation End Objective: CTF or Death

Simulation Field: AI Final Scenario: Landscape

Simulation Team: Red vs. Blue| 3 vs. Unknown AI Final Scenario

Simulation Vehicles For Team Red: 3 Banshees, 3 Chaingun Warthogs, 3 Ghost, 3 Scorpion Tanks

Simulation Vehicles For Team Blue: unknown: Covenant fleet AI vehicles independent

Simulation Weapons: Normal - Varied Range

Starting Weapons: None

Starting Weapon Add-on: All Weapon Variation

Simulation Norm: Standard to 100 percent is 1 Level 5 AI (singular AI) against 1 SPARTAN-III candidate
> Simulation Difficulty: This is 975 percent the standard of a simulation norm
Simulation Physics: Regular physics, 1 Exception Error:

Exception Error: Force Feedback raised to 350 percent
> Standard Feedback Level: 50 percent - 65 percent
Warning: Exception Error: Force Feedback Fatal Risk

Warning: May end in fatal cardiac arrest for user (70 percent possibility)
> Warning: May end in comatose state, or brain death (20 percent possibility)<p>

Simulation Rules Are As Follows:

1 Life, and 100 percent Health & 200 percent Shields For Team Red
> Friendly Fire (FF) On
Radar Enemy/Ally active, and Display Multiple Nav. Points on Radar By Choice
> 1 Flag Only for Team Red; Objective - Detonate Havoc Nuke Located at Flag Point<p>

Exception Error:
> AI Fleet: Full-scale Assault Fleet AI Final Scenario
Warning: Recommended for Full-Unit SPARTAN-III Training
> Warning: Norm Success Rate: .041 percent
Warning: Differentiating Difficulty:

Exception Error: Difficulty Range: 975 percent - 2550 percent
> Warning: Exception Error: Unknown AI Factor<p>

Warning: May end in fatal cardiac arrest for user (87 percent possibility)

> Warning: May end in comatose state, or brain death (40 percent possibility)<p>

Simulation Team Red: Spartan Dream, Spartan Lone, Spartan Chaos

Simulation Team Blue: AI Final Scenario

Team Specialties: SPARTAN-D092: Dream: Adept with almost every weapon, and able to remain calm under stress. A very heavy thinker, and able to come up with numerous battle plans for any situation. Elite leadership skills and adept at sniping from ground level, in an open field, with any weapon containing a scope. Skilled in stealth, and secrecy to defeat stronger opponents, and works good as team.

SPARTAN-D023: Lone: Performs "tricks" to assist team in any situation. Possibly most skilled recruit of the entire 3 SPARTAN programs at the age of recruiting. Trained in the art of sniping, and great aiming with grenades (covenant or human). It should be noted at his lowest ratio to date is 76 kills: 1 death against 3 level 6 singular spawning AIs, in any simulation, up to date.

SPARTAN-D115: Chaos: Best heavy weapons expert in SPARTAN-III program to date. Expert warthog driver and gunner. Interested in 19th century poetry, and mentions that it enforces his will. Has more stamina, than any other SPARTAN-III, to date.

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>(Unknown Star System, Draco III) (Simulation Time+0010)

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<p>"Yessireeee! Folks commin' at ya! It's gonna be hot! Watch your foot 'n' drop!" yelled the pelican dropship pilot as he maneuvered the dropship on plains.<p>

"Touchdown! Hit it SPARTANS!" bellowed the over-hyped pilot, when they were about to touch down on the ground.

As soon as the dropship had come in the proximity of land, 3 Spartan-IIIs, in upgraded MARK V MJOLNIR armor propelled themselves 14 meters, down towards the ground. Almost one and a half ton of metal and human landed more silently than a leaf, on the barren and dusty land. As soon as they had jumped, the Pelican landed, and the spartans began unloading their vehicles, weapons, additional ammo, and other equipment from the Pelican. When they were done unloading,

their Pelican pilot informed them that he would be back when their objective was complete.

"Good Luck, and call me if you need a hand! Give'em hell with those goodies! Spartans! YES SIR!" and with that, he and his Pelican were gone.

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>(Unknown Star System, Draco III) (Simulation
Time+0040)<hr>**-----

Dream looked at the "goodies" spread around him. There were enough weapons in the mobile weapon locker to defeat an entire armyâ€| and that was what they were here for. Most of the stockpiled weapons had been modified to suit the situation at hand. As he was thinking about the best method for facing an alien army, the AI in his armor's neural crystal-matrix interface came alive. Her name was Seeker, and she was the same Independent 6th Generation "Smart" AI as Cortana. She had a life span of 7 years, in which she would be put to very good use.

"Hmmmâ€|" she mused. "Plenty of space in this 'brain' of yoursâ€| lets see if I can put it to any good useâ€| like stopping the Covenant, and their Great Journey"

"You are not welcome." replied Dream, as he starting making battle plans for the oncoming battle.

"OK! Spartans this is the real battle. Our lives depend on it, and so do billions of others. We will do this, and do it right. We will finish this. It will be either us, or them left on the field, when this is over. I think it will be us. Now prove me right!" spoke Dream to his teammates to encourage them.

"First we should see what we are up against, and equip ourselves, according to the enemy" planned Chaos.

"Dream and Chaos, both of you search for the enemy separately in the captured Banshees. I will start setting up communications with home base, but ensure that the enemy do not see you at all costs." said Lone.

"I have a better idea, and it's more dangerousâ€| but it'll work better" contradicted Chaos. "Lone, strap yourself to a banshee very carefully, and I will fly it over the area. Make sure to bring a sniper with you, and with that, we will find them. Use your scope to scout because it will give us superior range and view, and I'll make sure to keep the banshee steady!"

"Scouting the covenant from miles away?" questioned Seeker "That sounds safe and easy"

"Now I see why you are called a 'Smart' AIâ€|" responded Dream.

Seeker fumed silently, but kept quiet.

The team agreed with Chaos on his method, and they set to work on their assigned tasks. Chaos started setting up custom-made foothold, and arm braces on the banshee, to ensure that it would be stable for Lone in mid-flight. Dream programmed the communications gear, and started encrypting all their communication feeds. He could expertly multi-task. As he was encrypting their communications, with the help of Seeker, he also started searching for frequencies at which they could interrupt, and observe the covenant battle plans. Lone found his customized S2-AM Sniper Rifle, with an upgraded scope, in the weapon stockpile. He started calibrating it for the best results, according to the temperature, the target elevation, and the movement of their banshee in mid-flight. Lone was not worried, because he knew that Chaos was the best vehicles expert in the entire SPARTAN-III Delta Company. They worked silently under the glaring sun, while the winds blew across the barren land. Slowly, time trickled away while they worked. When Lone and Chaos were finished, they stood up and informed Dream, that they would be scouting enemies.

"I want a detailed report of everything you see and remember the communications, and streaming video feed is encrypted, so you can communicate freely with each other." informed Dream, and he went back to searching for the covenant communication frequencies.

With Chaos's help, Lone strapped on the arm and leg braces, and lay down on top of their captured banshee, straddling the S2 AM Sniper Rifle, and brought the customized scope up to his helmet. When they finished with final cautions to ensure that Lone would be safe in midair, they flew.

After a quarter of an hour passed, Lone sighted what seemed like swarming ants, at the very limit of his sniper's scope zoom. He told Chaos to be cautious from then on as they moved toward the site. In another 3 minutes, the landscape had slowly, but surely, changed completely around them. Where there had been an empty and even ground, with a few trees, was now a forest, with cliffs rising off in the distance. The cliffs seemed to form a circle around a center point where it looked like an anthill. The radius of the plane the cliffs circled was about 1 or 2 miles. Of the circle, $\frac{3}{4}$ was covered by the dominating cliffs at the end of the level plain, and at the other edge, the forest slowly sneaked in the plain. Where the cliffs ended, even ground began, where again there were numerous ants.

Chaos and Lone both realized that the covenant activity would be centered between the cliffs. The cliffs offered excellent cover from threats, because only a small part of the terrain was open for attack. They landed their banshee on the very tops of one of the cliffs. The cliffs rose off in the distance, in front of them until they met the horizon, and then they abruptly dropped. They had to get to the edge of the cliffs, and then carefully glimpse down to access the covenant's strength. They didn't want to waste time, because they had no indication of the covenant's plan. Chaos and Lone started sprinting to the edge of the cliff so they could look down and see what danger awaited them.

When they were almost at the edge, having sprinted 4 miles in under 5 minutes, they paused to inform Dream of the latest developments.

"I believe we found the hive" | " messaged Chaos.

"Listen to me carefully! Make sure they do not realized we are here, and remember; right now, you are just scouting. I do not want you to fire at anyone" | just assess the covenants strength and report back" replied Dream.

"Understood" answered Chaos.

Slowly, they reached the edge of the cliffs. They carefully looked down the span of the mile-long rugged cliffs, which dominated the sky, like fearful knives, some jagged and some sharp, onto the center of the terrain. As their gaze traversed downwards, they felt a deep tremor shake them. What awaited them, shook even the spartans, who had not since felt fear in countless time. That was when they realized, the hopelessness of their situation, and acknowledged the true power of the covenant fleet, the spirits who would haunt them to death.

Lone activated his com. in awe, to report the horrors that he glimpsed, to his fellow spartan, Dream.

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>(Unknown Star System, Draco III) (Simulation
Time+0130)<hr>**-----

Dream thoughtfully pursued his assigned task. He was determined to discover the covenant's battle communication frequencies. If he discovered the covenant communication frequencies, he and his comrades could spy in on their strategies when encountered, and discover their future battle plans. With the help of Seeker, and his MJOLNIR armor's speech translation system, he was sure that he would be triumphant in the battle to come.

"It is easier with my help isn't it?" teased Seeker.

Dream chose to stay quiet, and resumed the assignment with renewed vigor.

After a few minutes, their task was accomplished, due to Seeker's help.

"Mission completed" | Now you can freely eavesdrop in to the covenant." announced Seeker.

Before Dream could activate his com. Mike, he received a hurried message from Chaos, who was scouting to assess the covenant's strength and fleet size, along with Lone. Dream realized that phenomenon had upset Chaos. Spartans had trained their entire lives to hide emotions in battles, regardless of their feelings. Dream had personally seen spartans who had their limbs bloodily cut and battered, yet they had carried on as casually as nothing had

occurred. Thus, he deduced, the message Chaos had for him must be very important.

"I can not express what I saw in just wordsâ€¦ Have you encrypted our video feed yet? I will try to get a live recording of itâ€¦" Chaos said.

"Affirmative," confirmed Dream. "The video feed is encrypted, so try to record and send me the uplinkâ€¦ But ensure that the covenant do not realize our existence yet"

"Understood!" responded Chaos, and after that only silence remained.

Dream decided to use his time efficiently while he waited for the video transmission. He took account of all the weapons, and their ammunition in their weapons stockpile. While he was substituting older weapons, for their more helpful counterparts, in the stockpile he received the shocking video feed from Chaos.

"I'll bet you regret thisâ€¦" said Seeker with a hidden glee when she saw the video.

Dream was shook, and realized that he had experienced fear, after what seemed like ages to him. But as a team leader, he kept all his emotions inside him and silently watched the videoâ€¦ while thinking about the best way to overcome the obstacle that they were presented with.

The video looked like it was recorded from approximately an height of 2 km, the view perching upon a cliff outcropping. It showed jagged and sharps cliffs arching into the sky, around a wide clearing, almost 3 miles across. The cliffs protected the flat terrain from three sides, and at the open side, tendrils of forests crept inwards. Dream realized that this spot would be the ultimate site for setting up bases, and repelling enemies. Once again, he acknowledged the covenant for their genius. Slowly the perspective snaked forwardâ€¦ and then abruptly shifted downwards, where the horror awaited.

There was a colossal stronghold, on the opposite side of the forest, almost at the very end of the terrain. It seemed almost 5 stories high, and about 200 meters wide. It was flanked by the cliffs on one side, and by countless covenant elites, grunts, jackals, and hunters on the other section. The base seemed to be the elites' command center. There were numerous elites streaming in and out of the fort. It seemed like the covenant were in the early stages of their battle preparations because most of their ground assault vehicles were spread out around the base, as if they had just been recently dropped by a fully equipped war cruiser, instead of being in formation, for ready assaults against enemiesâ€¦

Despite the numerous vehicles on the ground numerous banshees were already patrolling the area, appearing like dangerous vipers to ward off their snake charmers. They provided early reconnaissance for their allies.

Beneath the banshees awaited their seemingly infinite infantry troops. There seemed to be hundreds of jackals and grunts, backed by a smaller but more dangerous number of elites and hunters. They swarmed the terrain and uttered guttural commands in their alien

speech. The grunts at the very edges of the forest ward side of the terrain were operating plasma gun turrets, and searching uneasily for targets. They looked extremely bored, and that would be their disadvantage in the battle to come. Many Jackal snipers awaited all enemies on the top of the base, and the very rear of the cliffs. All of them were chatting, or walking idly, instead of focusing on scoping dangers. It seemed like the Elites were too busy with other tasks to enforce their strict commands. The Hunters were helping Elites inside the base. It was almost impossible to see inside the base, but through the glass-like windows, Dream could see shadows moving hurriedly.

The Elites outside the base seemed to be forming attack units out of the covenant attack fleet. Most of the units were similar in their formation. They consisted of one Major Elite, who appeared to be the leader, a pair of Hunters, three Minor Elites, fifteen Jackals of various sorts, and almost fifty grunts. They were huge units compared to all the formations the covenant had followed in other invasion fleets. To this formation, there were a few exceptions. There seemed to be units that had only Elites and Hunters, while others had only Elites and Grunts. There were about 10 units, excluding the extra grunts who were guarding the campsite on turrets, the jackal snipers on top of the base, and a number of elites and hunters in their fort base.

For their assistance, there were almost 30 vehicles of a diverse variety. Dream knew that the vehicles would be used by trained Elites, and Grunts. There seemed to be numerous Ghosts; the covenant's light reconnaissance vehicles, with speed and agility but reduced firepower, Wraiths; the ultimate challenges because of their superior firepower and dangerous plasma bombs, and Banshees; the aerial assault vehicles that worked on anti-gravity pods. The Ghosts and Wraiths were bunched together beside the base because they had not been put to use yet. The Banshees were already being operated by Elites, as they scouted the campsite, like perilous eagles.

Dream estimated that the covenant's invasion fleet consisted of: almost fifty Elites and thirty pairs of Hunters, approximately two hundred Jackals, and one thousand Grunts. Added to that were their vehicles which Dream estimated at: ten Banshees, five Wraiths, and about twenty plasma gun turrets and Ghosts. To defeat this entire fleet, the UNSC had sent in 3 spartans.

Dream realized the hopeless nature of this situation. He would need his entire SPARTAN-III Delta Company, to stand a chance against an army this big. 3 spartans against this many covenant members was suicidal. They would be dead as soon as they revealed themselves. Dream comprehended that the chances of 3 spartans winning this battle were non-existent. No matter how many miracles occurred, even if every bullet the spartan fired hit its target, if every maneuver the spartans executed worked flawlessly, if every opportunity was used to the spartans advantage; the situation would still be hopeless.

"I hate to tell you this, but even I can't think of a method to beat this army" muttered Seeker.

Dream activated his com. mike to call his spartans back.

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